1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

ruled its territory, and attempted to keep the peace with its neighbors and tributary states. 175 648

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the area of what is now Northern Nigeria was rocked by the Fulani wars under a religious leader, Othman dan Fodio, who proclaimed a *Jihad* or holy war. Ultimately these developments resulted in the founding of the empire of Sokoto. In Bornu the local Fulani organized an attack on the Kanuri kingdom, not so much to support the Sokoto Empire, as to take advantage of it and set up principalities of their own. By 1808, the Fulani in Bornu constituted a dangerous threat. Indeed they had succeeded in attacking, defeating and sacking the ancient capital of Bornu, Birni Ngazargamo. When this happened the ruler and his followers fled towards Lake Chad and were not able to return to the city until some unexpected aid from Kanem enabled them to deliver a powerful defeat to the Fulani forces some six weeks after they had abandoned the capital. A few years later in the winter of 1811–1812 another Fulani force attacked and pillaged the capital. Again the Kanuri were helped by this same Kanembu chief or Shehu who defeated the Fulani and sent them fleeing westward to the borders of Bornu.

However, this aid was to change the entire history of the empire. From 1812 onwards the traditional Bornu government lost its control of the state. The Shehu, Mohammed el Aminu, El Kanemi, or Shehu Laminu as he is remembered locally, had the only effective armed force in the Bornu kingdom, and he used this to control sporadic Fulani uprisings that continued until at least the 1820s. Both the traditional government and the Shehu moved away from the western and northern boundaries and set up in adjacent towns near the west shore of Lake Chad. People soon realized that the Shehu held power in the state and flocked to his town, while that of the old Magumi Sefuwa monarch became a small redoubt for those still loyal to the ancient dynasty. The former leaders still retained the royal title, held court, and collected or were given some of the state revenues. When they intrigued against Shehu Laminu, he simply deposed them. At the same time he made bargains with rival claimants to the old throne so that any changes in the royal office, made under his direction, would be to his own advantage. Meanwhile the ancient rulers came more and more to be simply ceremonial puppets in the hands of the real ruler of Bornu, Shehu Laminu. 175 642 [648] [643] [662]

Yet Laminu never asserted ultimate control over the kingdom. Even after he had built a new capital, at Kuka, for himself and his dependents, the small village of Birni nearby was maintained for the ancient monarchy. Across the entire Sudan and beyond, however, he was recognized as the real ruler of Bornu. He was the leader of its administration and his political, military, and judicial sagacity were and still are lauded in praise songs that match these secular skills with his supernatural powers. Indeed his fame spread to Europe as well. This resulted from the writings of Denham and Clapperton, who crossed the desert in the 1820s and remained for an extended period in Bornu learning about its people and of the double regency under Shehu Laminu's control. Laminu died in 1835 and it was not until a decade later in 1845 or 1846 that his son, Omar, finally did away with the last remaining members of the Sefuwa dynasty proclaiming himself and his royal heirs to be the only rulers of Bornu. This was the occasion for the formal inception of Bornu's second dynasty whose descendants are the ruling family in the kingdom at the pres- 175 642 643

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

ma, who when he was in court, sat in front of the throne facing the same way as the Shehu between the two lines. This symbolized his semi-independent status as a holder of a large section of the kingdom rather than a set of fragmented fiefs. Thus the idea of a consolidated set of fief-holdings on the western boundary was maintained. There was a constant threat from the Fulani which made such a move politically expedient.

How much actual power this nineteenth-century court actually had is debatable. Obviously a few favorite advisers who had the ear of the monarch could become very powerful men during the period of their favor. However, who these were seems to have varied throughout the century. Indeed even a place in court might be gained by a very ambitious rural chief, if he appeared often enough and was able to please the monarch by his service and tributes. In the realm of the judiciary some significant changes occurred as well. Before the nineteenth century, as we have already noted, there was a chief judge, the Talba, who was ranked as "the second man" in the state. During the double regency at the beginning of the century, the first Shehu, Laminu, acted as his own chief judge. He was steeped in Koranic learning and is supposed to have had magical powers that enabled him to adjudicate even the most difficult of cases, harshly but with justice. Parenthetically, this power—and not his military acumen and leadership—is considered by the traditions to have been the chief reason why Laminu saved Bornu from the Fulani wars. Later in his rule, sometime in the 1820s, Shehu Laminu appointed two leading religious personages who came from the families of the leading Bornu religious practitioners to the new offices of Liman and Imam. The former took over the major duties of chief legal adviser to the Shehu, while the Imam became the chief religious practitioner in the state. The old Talba stayed with the court of the former dynasty, and after its demise the title became a lesser one in the judicial hierarchy which is where it stands today.

Punishments for misdemeanors were relatively harsh by contempory standards. Adultery on a Muslim holy day could bring 400 lashes to a man or 200 to a woman. It was believed that judges in the capital of Kuka actually set spies upon the populace in search of law breakers. Intentional murder was punishable by death, and the relatives of the dead man carried out the execution by stoning the murderer. Thieves who were repeatedly caught finally had a hand cut off or were tortured by being buried up to the neck, then having their heads buttered or honeyed and exposed above the ground to attract insects. Unpaid debts proven in court resulted in the confiscation of all the debtor's movable property and a fine to the court. The debtor was pinned to the ground by court officials until he consented to confiscation. However, if he obviously had no means at all, the judge dismissed the case with the words, "God send you the means."

All titled officials and even untitled followers of the Shehu could be given or they could inherit, at the pleasure of the Shehu, rights of revenue collection and administration in one or more settlements spread throughout the entire state. These fiefs were granted by the Shehu, nominal owner of all the land in the state. Generally speaking such rights were hereditary in the male line, but the Shehu could diminish or expand the holding of one fief-holder at the expense of another, and a new monarch was expected to patronize his own favorites. Any person holding a fief directly from the monarch was called a chima kura or "the big lord." There

By the time the big lord living in the capital would have appointed several representatives to this particular fief because it had grown so big. Such fiefs were the ones most likely to fall prey to sub-division at the death of a king and appointment of a new one. For at this time the incoming monarch had to reward his chief supporters with grants of new fiefs.

As in the pre-nineteenth century the political hierarchy served as an appeal court system, and at the very top of the local fief hierarchy the junior lords shared adjudication with the most senior local leader whatever his rank. Usually these very senior political leaders of the fief had koranic scholars, or mallams, who gave legal advice. Serious cases such as homicide were referred immediately to the capital.

The other variety of fief, that based on birth into a particular group, or *jili* is less well understood. The word "jili" refers to variety or kind. The people speak of this or that jili of soil, or tree, or person. In using it to refer to a person they give his territorial or settlement background, or ethnic group, or his clan grouping if this differs from his territorial classification. Thus a person can have several jili —ethnic, territorial, or clan. Even patrilineal lineage affiliation can be described under this term. Nomadic groups in Bornu were represented as jili in the Shehu's court by a big lord of the jili (chima kura jilibe); this man was, in effect, the fief-holder responsible for the nomad group. Sometimes he was a leader of the group itself, and at other times he was a trusted Kanuri follower of the monarch. In both cases the big lord of the jili administered the group through his own representative in the group who was, unlike the territorial grouping, the local leader of a nomad clan, or a sub-tribe. Sometimes entire tribal groupings came under one jurisdiction, and at other times or in other sections of the state the tribe would be broken down into subsections based on clan groupings with one or more clans under a single fief-holder or big lord of the jili.

This double fief system allowed the nineteenth-century Bornu government the organizational means of administering both the settled and nomadic populations of Bornu. It also did something else very important, for it allowed the government effective control over the population even when natural disasters such as outbreaks of disease or sudden invasions sent the people into flight. If a large set of settlements had grown up in one territory from an original one, and this area was then beset by some disaster, which made the people flee in several directions, they were still thought of as a jili or a single variety of persons. They were still organized under their old lords, and their old leaders still retained over them some powers of taxation and demands of loyalty. If the entire kingdom was in an uproar —as it was during the Fulani wars at the beginning of the century with people fleeing in all directions—then old leaders, or former leaders, could muster their scattered followers as jili, and the political integration of the kingdom remained intact and viable until new settlements stabilized locally, and the territorial-based fief system could re-assert itself.

Complicating the system was the settlement of groups with fiefs through permission granted by the big lord in the capital. He could be approached by the leaders of a group of craftsmen, or kinsmen, or people of the same ethnic extraction, who requested of him that they be allowed to settle in one of his fiefs. In this case, the special group was directly under the jurisdiction of the lord through his local administrator, the junior lord, who dealt with their headman. In later generations,

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

general, the Shehu must feel he has gained a loyal supporter and any suspicion to the contrary would bar an eligible contender from the position. The same applies in the case of members of the Shehu's council and especially its chairman, the Waziri. People say that would-be applicants give gifts, attempt to link themselves by marriage, and in general ingratiate themselves with the Shehu and his councilors who play the major part in such decisions; however such things are not easy to observe directly. On the other hand several people have told me that they regularly visit influential men in the city bringing gifts of cash and foodstuff and generally paying their respects to these men in the hopes that one day when a proper vacancy occurs, they will obtain the office of lawan. In other words this traditional mode of soliciting an appointment is admitted to for the office of lawan.

In the district capital the district head's house is always at the east end of the town plaza and is the most impressive compound in the village. The compound is regarded as emirate property and can only be used while the incumbent is in office after which time he must move out. In addition each district head has his own compound in the royal ward of Maiduguri in the capital with a residing chief subordinate (*wakil*) who appears at official state functions in the Shehu's court to represent his superior. In his rural area the district head has a large group of followers who live in his own compound and the surrounding vicinity. These men form a group of linked households under their leader, the chief follower of the district head who serves as his deputy in the latter's absence. In Magumeri a few of these followers have been recruited during their own lifetime, but most of them are the sons of men who have always been followers of this district head and his father before him.

At first glance these followers are indistinguishable from ordinary peasants except for the fact that some of them have expensive looking horses given to them by the district head. They help collect nomad cattle taxes, run messages for the district head, and never fail to ride in honor of their leader on special ceremonial occasions or when an important visitor has come to town. Most important they must be willing to leave town or move to another place whenever their superior is stationed elsewhere, while peasants are most often linked by social relations with a particular spot. These men have only one allegiance—that of subordination, discipline and respect to their superior, the district head. Thus they are never fully trusted by the more permanent local residents. Indeed younger members of the district head's following are often feared as well as mistrusted. They have no farms, no wives, and no households of their own. They talk, play cards, drink, look for amorous experiences in the local area, and are felt to be spies for the district head. When such men approach a group of peasant menfolk, the conversation suddenly stops, then slowly begins again on a note of pleasant but iridescent chit-chat in which nothing really serious or informative about local affairs is ever mentioned. Although the hierarchy of lawan and bullama under a district head is his official administrative organization in the district, his followers form an unofficial organization to execute his policies. Unlike the lawan and bullama they are totally dependent upon him for support and status in the society. In return they give him the prestige that comes from having a large retinue of followers. They also organize his tax collections, act as messengers, and sometimes they are even used to discipline lawans who are not complying with administration demands. Thus one lawan complained to a district head that he could not raise the tax assessment for his vil-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

larly as his representatives. The wakil also makes regular visits to important emirate leaders and tries to maintain a constant check on political developments in the capital and the emirate as a whole. Through this organization and through the giving of gifts and hospitality to visitors and messengers from the capital, as well as cultivating high placed friends, the district head maintains and builds up a communication network through which he obtains a many-sided picture of events in the capital.

District heads are also linked to the capital by their membership in factions that help to make up the political life of the emirate. In pre-colonial times these factions grew out of the allegiance of nobles to the various segments of the royal lineage. This indeed was the reason the succession disputes to the throne could turn into bloody civil wars. These same traditional factions still exist today, but there have been added new ones which involve close alliances between very powerful men in the emirate government. These reflect the weakened authority of the Shehu, and the increase in power and authority of the Native Authority officials in the top positions of the emirate government. District heads linked to more powerful factions receive better information about the course of emirate politics and more protection when they need it than those related to weak ones. Thus one district head might be linked to a member of the royal family who has no official position in the Native Authority and who has little hope of gaining the throne; another might be closely linked to the Waziri or chairman of the Bornu Native Authority Council. The latter district head, because of his factional membership, is in a much stronger position in the emirate political organization as a whole than is the former. These links to the center both official and unofficial must be carefully developed and maintained by a district head. This is especially true when it is realized that a district head like any other member of the Bornu political system operates within two cultural orientations—one western and the other traditional Kanuri. The district head should give gifts to subordinates, to his faction leaders, and to many other powerful people in the state. From a western point of view these can be seen as bribes, while from a Kanuri vantage point they may be looked upon as obligatory and legitimate recognition by the district head of the power and protection that can be wielded by his superiors in the central government of the emirate. Since such expenses are not provided for in the district head's official salary, the means by which he obtains the wealth to make such gifts often involves breaking rules according to strict western civil service standards, although again such activities might be considered legitimate by local tradition.

The central focus of this behavior revolves around tax collection. The district head is seen in western terms to be an agent of government who collects taxes and is paid a salary for this and other services. However, he needs to maintain a large following who are not provided for by government if he is going to collect nomad cattle taxes. These men must ride out over the entire district—often several thousand square miles—to collect the tax. To keep these men as his tax collectors he needs much more revenue than his own salary. If he does not collect the tax, or enough taxes, he will be punished by dismissal or transfer to a smaller less prestigious district. He has very little choice; in order to keep his own organization going and to maintain friendly contact at the center by gift-giving, he must take some of the district's tax revenue for himself. This makes him vulnerable at all times; to comply with some demands which are deemed important he must break others

178 was. The changes noted above have made important inroads in
565 the social system. For many political appointments Western
[555] education has become a necessary requirement, and although many
[871] educated people still come from the aristocracy, commoners too may become educated, may even excel in the schools and receive jobs of political importance as a result of their scholastic ac-
B66 complishments. Along with modern education, election by direct vote in the urban areas has allowed commoners to move directly into politics, as members of the House of Assembly in Kaduna. This has been of little significance until very recently, but it represents a mechanism disruptive of the traditional social system. Lastly, the newly risen wealthy class, of non-aristocratic origin, has been able to take over, in some small measure, characteristics of the aristocracy through the use of their
[556] wealth. Since they are able to afford to make the pilgrimage, they benefit from the prestige accruing from being an Alhaji.
[662] They also benefit directly from giving money to political parties and thereby gain political power.

178 The opening up of new avenues toward wealth, prestige, and
554 political power, the characteristics of the old aristocracy,
565 has resulted in an increasing number of individuals of commoner family who have been able to achieve these goals. In recent years such individuals have been rewarded by having important
[645] titles conferred on them by the Shehu. Members of the Shehu's Council who did not come from aristocratic families have been
[431] granted noble titles. This process has been furthered by the

[GEIDAM]

128 erally which was discussed in the previous chapter. At times,
[125] quantitative data will be presented on a sample of 44 individuals, representing various selected social categories (see further definition of this sample given in Chapter 4).

1. Farming.

42 All land belongs, in theory, to the Shehu and is distributed by Lowans through the authority given them by the Shehu. A man living in the town of Geidam has a right to land surrounding the town, should he wish to make a farm. Such land becomes his in the sense that no one else can farm there, and it is inherited
[451] by his children like other forms of property. Any man who pays the property tax (haraji) in Geidam has a right to land. A newcomer to the town who desires land to farm asks a Lowan for a
[311] plot of land. Since all farm land up to two miles from the edge of the town is farmed by those previously settled in the town, land given to newcomers is uncleared brush far from the town it-
[662] self. However, by paying a sum to the Lowan, a man may be assigned land which is much closer and therefore more desirable. Unused sites become available when people leave Geidam.

House sites come under the same provisions as farm land. If a man wishes to build a house in Geidam he must first ask the permission of the Lowan in whose ward he seeks to build his house. If he wishes to build on unoccupied land he must pay a
[435] sum to the Lowan. The sum may vary from three to ten shillings, depending on the man's means. A man can sell a house which he

177 178 625 648 567 571 aspect of their behavior towards one another. Sergeant Usman comes only to report to Yerima each morning; otherwise he is never in the Ajari. He is absolutely trustworthy, and in retrospect it is evident that he was brought to Geidam to be in charge of the NA Police there because of this. The nature of the relationship between the Ajia and the Sergeant is, of course, unknown to the British administration and to the European Assistant Superintendent of Police, but in that relationship and in its effective use by Yerima Mustapha can be seen the persistence of the traditional social system, as well as the frustration of newer bureaucratic forms introduced by the British.

571 662 178 The relationship between the Ajia and the Geidam Police is typical in a general sense of all relationships within the political hierarchy centering in Geidam, though it is not always possible to see the structural lines as clearly as in a [sol] slave-master situation. Another special NA appointee in Geidam, Malam Jalo, operates the ferry crossing the Yobe River during its flood. This is a well-paying job, and is highly coveted. Malam Jalo is a member of an important family, and has political influence at the court which enabled him to get the appointment. He acts like a kabuna of Yerima's, and considers himself to be a kabuna though his job is entirely independent of that performed by the kabuna. By placing himself in the relationship of a kabuna to the Ajia, he defines his role in the political system, and at the same time indicates

571 his allegiance to the Ajia who might otherwise be tempted to
662 replace him with one of his own men.
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178 The kabuna represent a special category in the adminis-
571 tration of the district. The colonial administration makes no
631 provision for the kabuna; they are not NA appointees as are
66 all the other officeholders mentioned above; they receive no
salary. Yet, the services which they perform are vital if the district bureaucracy is to continue to function smoothly. The kabuna represent a traditional Kanuri social category whose roles are primarily in the political sphere. The roles of the kabuna have been slightly modified and adapted to the modern situation, but the relationship between kabuna and Ajia and between kabuna and populace is a traditional one and is once again typical of the persistence of the old social stratification system into the present.

571 Yerima Mustapha has fifty-nine kabuna at Geidam. Some
634 are slaves; some are free. Many have been with Yerima for years and years. Head of all the kabuna is Wakil Ali, a slave. The kabuna are each given a house to live in, a horse belonging to Yerima, a plot of land to farm, and ceremonial trappings for themselves and for their horses. In turn, they swear allegiance to Yerima and work for him.

2. A history of important office-holders in Geidam.

175 The present town of Geidam is on the site of an old town
called Dɔmjeri. Five miles to the west of the present Geidam

The personnel who occupy positions in the judiciary, however, are bound to the social system. The Alkalis of Geidam exhibit a pattern in their personal histories, and are representative of specific social strata--the Koranic malams, the Imams and the Alkalis--whose sons follow their fathers and pursue the same goals. Alkali Baba Kura was the son of Imam Komi, the chief Imam at Maiduguri who later became Chief Alkali. He studied the Koran, explanations of the Koran, Hadith (traditions), and Tarikh (chronicles) at his father's house and at the houses of other learned Malams in Maiduguri, and then went to study law at the Kano Law School. He was appointed Alkali for the districts of Magumeri and Gubio when he was only twenty-five years old, at the time when Yerima Mustapha was Ajia of Magumeri, and Yerima became his mentor. Alkali Baba Kura remained in Magumeri for four years. After Yerima moved to Geidam, Alkali Baba Kura was transferred to Geidam. One year later he was elected to serve in the Northern legislature at Kaduna, while continuing on as Alkali of Geidam. Then in August, 1957 he was again promoted, this time to be Inspector of Courts in Maiduguri. He and two other powerful and important Alkalis make up the Shehu's court. This is an extremely important position for so young a man, and Alkali Baba Kura owes much of his success to help which he received from Yerima, although his own family connections were still more important in helping rapidly to further his career. Alkali Baba Kura's older brother is today Imam Ibrahim, having succeeded his father as chief Imam in

GEIDAM

627 arbitration is encouraged, so long as the complainant has his
692 grievance adjusted.
[779]

627 Carrying out sholo is one of the most important functions
662 of the individual in a position of political authority. It is
431 subject to various forms of abuse, however, though there are self-regulating mechanisms which inhibit the continuation of abuses. The matter of fees and gifts in cases of sholo can be
[192] a source of difficulty. The words kunjo and nasha are used for any sort of gift. Kafelo is the traditional gift which the small man, the talaka, gives to the important man, the kantuoma. Risa (Arabic) means simply a bribe. Wushira is the fee paid
[779] to the court after a dispute is settled. According to Alkali Baba Kura, kafelo and risa amount to the same thing, and both are forbidden by Maliki law since gifts given with the expectation of preferences in the future are haram (forbidden according to religious law). Giving of kafelo is traditionally done nevertheless.

627 Before the hearing of a dispute, both parties give kafelo
[431] to the mediator. If no kafelo is given, the dispute will not be heard. After a ruling is made in the dispute, the side which has received a favorable decision gives wushira to the medi-
[693] ator. The reasoning involved in the giving of wushira is that if the case had gone to court a set fee would have been paid. When a case is heard in Sholo, therefore, the mediator receives as wushira a smaller fee than would have been paid in court.

Despite its outlawing by the British administration, sholo

GEIDAM

651 cal labor involved. Digma, on the other hand, has moved into
634 the district which Yerima left, so that the contrast between
663 the two is particularly marked. Taxes have constantly been
156 declining in his district, and he is continually suspected of
embezzling tax money--otherwise how else can one explain the
meager sums brought in from such a prosperous district? The
threat of investigation and dismissal hovers over Digma, a
[208] nervous and suspicious man to begin with. He is not liked in
his district, is not a generous man, and has few kabuna under
him. Consequently he is driven to go out and to collect the
taxes himself, but the job is far more than one man could ever
accomplish and he has only increased worries to show for his
efforts. Every failure of Digma's recalls the memory of Yerima,
who was respected and liked, who was generous, and who per-
634 formed so well as Ajia. Yerima's success in this as in so
663 many things derives from his keen insight into the traditional
554 social structure and his ability to adapt and use traditional
156 means to achieve his ends. The manner in which he maintains a
large corps of kabuna, many of them slaves, and uses their
services to his advantage while at the same time fulfilling all
the obligations of a great aristocrat, are an illustration of
this. Digma on the other hand is unable to act the part of a
traditional aristocrat, and constantly lives in fear of those
above him.

651 One way of handling the problem of inducing Fulani Ardos
634 to come into a district while at the same time taxing their
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651 cattle is to deal directly with the Ardos and Mais, bribing
634 them with gifts to come into the district. This is highly im-
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662 proper, as the Fulani of a district are considered a part of that district. Movement of Fulani from one district to another merely alters the source of jangali, but does nothing to increase the total amount which flows into the central NA treasury. Indeed, one source of concern to Yerima is that the Fulani Ardos of Geidam District will hear that the Ajia of Magumeri District, which is directly south of Geidam and shares with it a long unprotected border, has an inadequate number of horsemen, and will move south into Magumeri District out of reach of Yerima's kabuna, to avoid paying jangali. Should such a movement out of his district occur, Yerima would notify the Waziri in Maiduguri, who would in turn force Digma to patrol his side of the border to prevent the Fulani from moving unnoticed into his district. It is clear, however, that Yerima is not above offering inducements to Fulani Ardos to move into his territory and increase his tax lists.

651 Yerima's overall scheme depends on the stationing of im-
634 portant kabuna who are in charge of jangali collection in their
563
66 areas. These are as follows:

Grema Jisami - responsible for all the territory north of the Yobe River.
Kolo Kime - responsible for the area around Gumsa, and all the Fulani under Mai Musa.
Aba Chiari - responsible for the area around Kusur, and all the Fulani under Mai Kusur.
Kangadi - responsible for the Maganuwa area, and the Fulani under Mai Maganuwa.
Kazella Dokalia - responsible for the Zurukuduk area, but with no single Fulani Mai in his area.

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661 Good examples of these conflicts can be seen in some of the recorded history of Magumeri District in the last fifty years. From 1921 to 1929, Lawan Tayil, a follower of the DH, is only mentioned briefly and always alluded to as a competent Lawan. After the DH left the District in 1929 and was replaced by a new one, adverse reports by British officers (who had talked to the new DH) became more and more common. It was noted that Lawan Tayil was unpopular with the people, that there was emigration out of his village area due to exhortative taxation, and that he was disrespectful to those in authority. In 1934 he was deposed and a younger brother of the new DH was installed
631 as Lawan. Examples like this are extremely common from Magumeri's
661 recent past as well as from the other Districts. This is reflected in the length of term of Lawans in office, taken from three widely separated Districts. The average length of tenure for a Lawan who is the follower of reigning Lawan is ten years if the DH remains in the District; on the other hand, the average length of tenure for a Lawan (in the District capital) is four years after a DH has left the District.

There is a tendency indicated in the historical records
631 for DH's to appoint younger brothers as Lawans. But this has its lim-
661 its; sometimes kin are passed over, or relationships are broken because
662 a kin member feels that he will be held responsible for his kinsman's behaviour. Thus in 1935, the Lawan of Magumeri asked the British authorities if he could be moved to another District away from the hegemony of an older brother who was his DH. By 1935 the British had received a great many complaints from Magumeri District about the oppressive taxation of the DH. Thus the DH's younger brother sensing that trouble was brewing for the DH, felt that it would be more advantageous for his own political career if he were out of his older brother's District,

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634 The DH as a titled sub-ruler under the Shehu still has a
647 highly respected position in the society, and the N.A. officials are
554 ready and willing to pay respect to his traditional prestige. Thus
[576] if the DH (on the rare occasions when he does emerge from his residence) passes by, N.A. officials like everyone else stand up while he moves past them; similarly as a mark of respect they remove their shoes before coming into his presence.

634 Finally, if the N.A. official is not incorporated into the
647 extended household organization of the DH, then the factional member-
662 ships of the DH as compared to that of the official also tend to determine how much pressure the DH is able to exert in the situation. If the DH is closely connected to the Department Heads, and other high ranking N.A. officials, and these latter respect his friendship and judgement, then he may have an avenue of control over the local official through the latter's own superiors. On the other hand, if the N.A. employee is himself connected to powerful factions in the state, then the DH knows that this particular person can bring powerful forces into action against him.

634 The potential conflict between the DH and the N.A. officials
647 disappears when the latter is part of the DH's extended household or-
557 ganization. In Magumeri, one N.A. Messenger and the N.A. prison warder were followers of the DH. The N.A. Messenger started about twenty years ago in Maiduguri as a seller of cut grass for horse feed. Later he became attached as a servant-follower to an ex-Shehu's son[1] and from there became a horsed follower (ko'una) of the present DH of Magumeri who

[838] (1) Bornu gossip attributes this rather large upward leap to a homosexual relationship between the servant and his master, which the Kanuri believe is one way for a man of no means to move up the social ladder; i.e. by making himself available sexually to a homosexual member of the upper classes.

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554 owes many obligations to this Shehu's son. Later, through his connections to both these men, and their connections in the Emirate, he was appointed to the job of N. A. Messenger assigned to the DH of Magumeri. The DH arranged that this man be used to deliver the N. A. salaries from [661] Maiduguri to Magumeri. Since the salaries are in cash, the Messenger is able to do some quick trading with the money before he brings it back to [203] the District. Because of his constant trips back and forth to and from the capital, plus his many contacts among the nobles and officials of the State, this Messenger has become the DH's listening post for news and gossip from the city. This communication position is vitally important to the DH since he must know of shifts in policy objectives and personnel in the capital in order to guage properly the pressures that may be exerted upon him from the center. The Messenger fulfilling this role has, in his turn, used his position to usurp a leading status among the followers of the DH, many of whom are either hereditary or long-term members of the DH's organization. They feel that he is "pushy" and confidentially accuse him of secret immorality. On the other hand, his fellow N. A. officials in the District maintain only a polite but distant relationship with him; (a) because of his close ties to the DH, and (b) because he always delivers their salaries late, which naturally antagonizes them. The man thus pays a high price of loneliness and semi-isolation for the key position he has carved for himself in the DH's organization.

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662 The prison warder who kept the little jail in Magumeri, although not formally a DH's follower, was well on the way to becoming

634 one, before he was re-stationed to the capital city by the N.A. He (1)
647 had arrived several years ago in Magumeri as the jail keeper and the
662 DH had given him a place to live within the walls of his own residence. In consequence almost all of the jailer's friendships and social relations were with people of the DH's extended household organization. This created a gap between the jailer and the other N.A. officials who felt that he was not completely trustworthy as a confidential friend, since gossip and criticism of the DH - a common topic of conversation - might be dangerous in his presence. Finally in 1955, the DH gave the jailer a young virgin of his household over whom he had marriage dispensation rights. This tied the relationship much tighter, and had the jailer stayed on in Magumeri, he would have been one of the few N.A. officials whom the DH could count on for subservient behaviour.

The D.H.'s Relations to the Center

631 The formal and informal links of the DH to the capital are
634 (2)
642 extremely complex and are only treated here in summary form.

Formally the DH is responsible to only one body in the political organization of Bornu, viz. the Shehu-in-Council. This body under the chairmanship of the Waziri (the Chief Councillor) decides on the policies of the State, draws up the annual budget, heads up the various departments of the N.A., acts as a court in trying cases of N.A.

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[648] (1) This move was not due to machinations in the N.A. A new, young British officer was at the time zealously working on the Bornu prison system and felt that more warders were needed in Maiduguri, which soon became the accepted policy. In the colonial service of Northern Nigeria, shifts and changes of various kinds can be labelled "improvements" in Reports, and the young officer receives some merit for his conscientiousness. C.f. the picture given by Joyce Cary, in his novel Mr. Johnson, of the British officers in Northern Nigeria, each with his own peculiar "improvement" enthusiasm.

[114] (2) A separate study of these relations is being prepared in collaboration with Prof. A. G. Frank, comparing the role of the DH with that of the Russian industrial manager.

634 By the judicious giving of gifts to
203 these travellers when they come to pay their respects in the District
[431] capital, the DH can build up a large communication network through which he obtains a many-sided picture of events in the capital.(1) Finally the DH is linked to a faction in the Bornu state which has its most powerful leaders in the capital. Traditionally these factions emerged from the allegiance of nobles to the various agnatic lineage segments of the royal family. These remain today but are now joined by factions representing some of the heads of the modern civil service. DH's linked to more powerful factions receive better information and more protection than those joined to weak ones. Thus the DH of Magumeri who had inherited a factional membership from his father which linked him to an effete second son of a former Shehu received much less support than another DH who was linked to the faction headed by the present Waziri (head of the Shehu's council and the N.A.). Because of the constant contact of the Waziri with all of the agencies of government including the British, the second DH had a much more intimate knowledge of the workings of Emirate politics at the center.

634 These informal links become important when it is realized
662 that the DH works under a system of conflicting standards all of which
648 can be enforced. Thus a DH must give large gifts periodically to his faction leaders, to the Shehu, and to many other persons throughout the state. The British see these as bribes, the Kanuri regard them as legitimate and obligatory. Since such expenses are not envisaged in a DH's salary he is forced to obtain the money illegally (according to
634 British standards). Again, the DH's success in obtaining tax receipts
651 is of major importance. One British officer told the writer that he did

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(1) See the discussion above on nona and birsum for the dynamics of interpersonal relations involved in "paying respects", pp.57-68.

647 557 traditional one. One of the senior members of an individual's agnatic group arranges an audience with some person connected to an N.A. department. One informant in the N.A. commented on recruitment in the following manner.

> If you want a job in the Treasury, one of your relatives (a senior male agnate) will find out, if he does not already know, the name of some person who is known to "help" people and go to greet him some night. Your relative will give him some money and he will say that you must come back the next day and he will tell you. Then he will find you a job in the Department, probably by using some of the money your relative gave him, and then the job is yours, and you are in the N.A. . . . Sometimes it takes a long time.

647 Because of the constant shifts in personnel, some to higher positions, others because of dismissals or jail terms, there is much unpredictability of job tenure in the N.A. and suspicion of unorthodox 647 behaviour is a common rule. Thus one junior N.A. official remarked 576 that he must be careful in his department to always dress less well than his superiors, or it would be considered ro kura (ambitious, proud), and therefore threatening. On the other hand, he must not dress too poorly or his superiors will consider him a wastrel, who 647 spends his money on women, praise-singers, and drink. Again, it is extremely difficult to transfer (through own effort) from one branch of the service to another. To transfer, a formal application must be made to the person's own department heads and N.A. council; if a release is granted, then a further application to the desired department [829] can be submitted. To the Kanuri such a transfer is not considered a rejection of the work, but of the people in the department. Thus informants claimed that they would be considered ingrates and trouble- [662] makers if they were ever to attempt such a thing. Transfers, if they are to be accomplished at all, must be done through relatives and friends "visiting at night", i.e. paying tribute to the appropriate

647 people higher up in the N.A. organization. It might also be achieved
662 by using factional membership if this membership group was powerful enough.

647 Advancement in the N.A. is a combination of education, and
[557] diplomatic skill at Kanuri interpersonal relations, plus the status of one's agnatic group in the factional segments of the state. Western education, unless it is of a University caliber, is not enough, especially when those higher up in the N.A. are often less well educated than some of the personnel lower down who have come through an expanded educational program that was not available to many of the older generation.

On the surface, the N.A. looks like a western civil service. There are offices, typewriters, clerks, officials, expense
647 vouchers, memoranda, telephones, employee organizations, etc. However,
571 within the N.A. it is soon observed that Kanuri patterns of association are still highly determinative of the methods of behaving. "Big men" in the N.A. have their large extended household organizations of followers and kinsmen, and establishment of loyalty and subservience to superiors in the N.A. itself through the granting of socio-economic rewards still operates. This is why N.A. officials stationed in the Districts are unstable elements in the District organization of the NH. Their loyalties must be towards their department organization or
[641] they may find themselves in trouble. Finally it should be understood that the idea of loyalty to an ideal of public service, rather than to particular individuals is a foreign concept that has no place in traditional Kanuri society and its norms of conduct.

Discipline in the N.A. reflects the operation of Kanuri